

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00024 01 OF 02 080758Z

17

ACTION NEA-09

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R 071455Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1849

INFO RUFHR /AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 1351

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON 2179

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TRIPOLI 0024

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR LY MO TS AG

SUBJECT: LIBYAN RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO, ALGERIA, AND
TUNISIA

REF: RABAT 56 AND TRIPOLI 1344

SUMMARY: LIBYA HAS NAMED AMBASSADORS TO MOROCCO, ALGERIA,
AND TUNISIA, AND SEEMS TO BE TRYING TO IMPROVE ITS FORMAL
DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS WITH THESE COUNTRIES. WE SEE THIS AS
CHANGE IN TACTICS, NOT GOALS. IN CASE OF MOROCCO, IT IS
HARD TO SEE QADHAFI REVERSING HIS FIELD ABOUT HASSAN, WHO
EPITOMIZES EVERYTHING HE ABHORS, AND THE ONE PUBLIC STATE-
MENT HE HAS MADE ON THE SUBJECT SINCE THE RABAT SUMMIT BEARS
THIS OUT. A BY-PRODUCT OF AN UPGRADED LIBYAN EMBASSY IN RABAT
WILL BE INCREASED ACCESS BY QADHAFI'S AGENTS TO MOROCCAN

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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 00024 01 OF 02 080758Z

OPPOSITION, AND THIS MAY BE THE POINT. LIBYA

HAS MORE IN COMMON WITH ALGERIA, AND PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA MAY SEEM TO BE BETTER. ALGERIAN WORKERS WOULD BE WELCOME HERE, AND QADHAFI WOULD LIKE TO NEUTRALIZE BOUMEDIENNE'S OPPOSITION TO LIBYAN-TUNISIAN UNITY. WITH TUNISIA, QADHAFI IS STICKING TO LINE THAT BOURGUIBA MUST KEEP HIS WORD ABOUT UNITY, OR EXPLAIN HIS FAILURE TO DO SO FACE TO FACE. IN SUM, THESE DIPLOMATIC MOVES DO NOT INDICATE NEW QADHAFI POLICIES IN NORTH AFRICA. END SUMMARY.

1. QADHAFI'S RELATIONS WITH HIS NORTH AFRICA NEIGHBORS SEEM TO BE ENTERING A DIPLOMATIC PHASE. HE HAS NAMED AMBASSADORS TO THE THREE COUNTRIES: ABDALLAH SUWAYSI, FORMERLY AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, TO RABAT

(IDRIS FELLAH HAS ALSO BEEN NAMED MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR TO TRIPOLI, AND GOM HAS GIVEN AGREEMENT TO SUWAYSI, ACCORDING TO PRESS HERE); ABD AL-FATAH NAAS, FORMERLY UNDERSECRETARY OF LIBYAN FOREIGN MINISTRY, IS GOING TO ALGIERS; AND ABD AL-HAMID ZINTANI, MINISTER OF YOUTH AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS UNTIL RECENT GOVT RESHUFFLE, TO TUNIS, THIS IS PART OF THOROUGH REORGANIZATION AND EXPANSION OF FOREIGN MINISTRY, CARRIED OUT UNDER QADHAFI'S NAMING OF RCC MEMBER AL-HUNI, KNOWN AS RELATIVE MODERATE, TO BE FOREIGN MINISTER. STAFFS OF EMBASSIES ARE ALSO TO BE STRENGTHENED. A NEW LIBYAN RELIANCE ON PREVIOUSLY NEGLECTED TRADITIONAL DIPLOMATIC MACHINERY HAS THUS BEEN INSTITUTIONALIZED, TO COIN A PHRASE. WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THIS IS CHANGE IN TACTICS, NOT GOALS, AND THAT IT DOES NOT MEAN QADHAFI WILL STOP USING CONSIDERABLE MEANS AT HIS DISPOSAL TO PROMOTE HIS LONG-RANGE AMBITIONS OF UNITY IN A RADICALIZED ARAB WORLD (TRIPOLI REFTEL).

2. IN CASE OF MOROCCO, WE DOUBT VERY MUCH THAT QADHAFI HAS DONE ANY BASIC RETHINKING OF HIS RELATIONS WITH KING HASSAN, AS DIRECTOR OF ROYAL CABINET BENSOUDA SUGGESTS. HASSAN EPITOMIZES EVERYTHING QADHAFI AND HIS COLLEAGUES ABHOR. IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE QADHAFI HAS SUDDENLY COME TO CONCLUSION THAT HIS MODEL NASSER MISLED HIM ABOUT HASSAN, ALTHOUGH IT IS JUST POSSIBLE HASSAN'S ROLE AT RABAT SUMMIT CONVINCED QADHAFI THAT WHATEVER ELSE KING MAY BE, HE IS AN ARAB PATRIOT. AGAINST THIS, HOWEVER, IS FACT THAT SUBSEQUENTLY

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PAGE 03 TRIPOL 00024 01 OF 02 080758Z

DURING LIBYAN PARTY CONGRESS IN NOV, QADHAFI LUMPED HASSAN AND HUSSAIN TOGETHER, AND SAID LIBYA WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK AGAINST THEM. HASSAN, QADHAFI TOLD CONGRESS WITH CURIOUS LOGIC, OUGHT TO BE CONSIDERED A DEAD MAN, SINCE HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED TWICE OVER (REFERRING TO 1971 AND 1972 COUP ATTEMPT). IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO KNOW WHOM BENSOUDA SAW WHEN HE WAS IN BYA. IF IT WAS FONMIN AL-HUNI WHO TOLD HIM QADHAFI HAD CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT HASSAN,

EITHER WE ARE WRONG IN THINKING QADHAFI'S AMBITIONS ARE UNCHANGED, AL-HUNI IS CONDUCTING HIS OWN FOREIGN POLICY, OR AL-HUNI INTENTIONALLY MISLED BENSOU DA ON QADHAFI'S ORDERS. WE RECALL ONLY FDH SHORT MONTHS AGO QADHAFI AND HASSAN WERE REPORTEDLY TRYING TO KILL EACH OTHER BY INTER-POSED ASSASSINATION SQUADS, AND NOTE THAT ONE BY-PRODUCT OF UPGRADED LIBYAN DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION IN MOROCCO WILL BE INCREASED OPPORTUNITY FOR QADHAFI'S AGENTS TO FORMENT ANTI-HASSAN SUBVERSION; ON PAST FORM, IT IS HARD TO SEE QADHAFI PASSING UP THE CHANCE. ON SPANISH SAHARA, QADHAFI

HAS SAID THAT IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO LIBERATES THE SAHARA, AND HE HAS AVOIDED TAKING A POSITION ON THE RIVAL ARAB CLAIMS TO TERRITORY. WE NOTE SAHARAN LIBERATION FRONT WHICH FAVORS SAHARAN INDEPENDENCE RECEIVES LIBYAN SUPPORT (RABAT A-149), AND WE WOULD EXPECT THIS SUPPORT TO CONTINUE. IN SHORT, MOROCCAN DISTRUST ON QADHAFI, AS EXPRESSED BY BENSOU DA, IS WELL-FOUNDED IN OUR OPINION, AND KING HASSAN WOULD DO WELL TO TAKE A LONG SPOON TO SUP WITH QADHAFI.

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00024 02 OF 02 080841Z

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ACTION NEA-09

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INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TRIPOLI 0024

3. PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN ALGERIA AND LIBYA WOULD SEEM TO BE BETTER. RCC MEMBER AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR AL-HUMAYDI APPARENTLY MADE PITCH FOR BETTER RELATIONS WHEN HE REPRESENTED LIBYA AT FUNERAL OF ALGERIAN MINISTER OF INTERIOR AL-MDEGHRI IN EARLY DEC, PERHAPS FOLLOWING UP AN APPROACH BY JALLUD AT NOV 1 CELEBRATIONS IN ALGIERS. LIBYA HAS SOME THINGS IN COMMON WITH ALGERIA BESIDES LONG (AND DISPUTED) BORDER: BOTH COUNTRIES ARE LOYAL OPEC MEMBERS, BOTH ARE MAJOR PRODUCERS OF LNG WHO HAVE AN INTEREST IN WORKING TOGETHER TO PUSH UP PRICE. IF ALGERIAN

WORKERS COME BACK FROM EUROPE IN ANY NUMBERS AS RESULT OF DOWNTURN IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, LABOR-SHORT LIBYA MIGHT BE NATURAL PLACE TO SEND THEM. BOTH REGIMES ARE "REVOLUTIONARY" AND "SOCIALIST" IN NAME, AND TAKE SIMILAR RADICAL LINES ON ARAB ISSUES. QADHAFI MUST KNOW THERE CAN BE NO LIBYAN

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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 00024 02 OF 02 080841Z

UNITY WITH TUNISIA OVER ALGERIAN OPPOSITION, AND HE MUST REMEMBER BOUMEDIENNE'S OUTRAGED REACTION TO JERBA DECLARATION. HE WOULD PROBABLY LIKE TO MEND FENCES WITH ALGERIA, WHOSE LEADERS HE PROBABLY RESPECTS, AND THERE WOULD SEEM TO BE NO GREAT BAR TO THIS. WE WOULD OBVIOUSLY WELCOME COMMENT BY EMBASSY ALGIERS HERE.

4. THIS LEADS TO TUNISIA, WHERE QADHAFI IS STICKING TO HIS LINE THAT JERBA DECLARATION MUST BE IMPLEMENTED. FAILING THAT, HE AT LEAST WANTS TO HAVE IT OUT WITH BOURGUIBA, AND TO REPROACH HIM PERSONALLY FOR GOING BACK ON HIS PLEDGE WORD. IN MEANTIME, HE WILL PROBABLY SEEK TO ENCOURAGE UNIONIST SENTIMENT IN TUNISIA BY ANY MEANS, INCLUDING SUBVERSION. FORMER TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MASMOUDI SEEMS TO BE ACTING AS INSTRUMENT OF THIS POLICY. WE DO NOT TAKE REPORTS OF LIBYAN PLANS TO INVADE TUNISIA SERIOUSLY, ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS FROM REPORTING BY EMBASSY TUNIS THAT TUNISIAN LEADERS DO.

5. IN SUM, WE DO NOT THINK THERE IS A "NEW QADHAFI" IN NORTH AFRICA. WHILE WE DO NOT PRETEND TO READ HIS MIND, AND INTELLIGENCE AVAILABLE TO US IS SKIMPY, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT HIS PRIMARY OBJECTIVE IN NORTH AFRICA, AS IN THE EAST, REMAINS UNITY ON HIS OWN RADICAL TERMS.

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